

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An image distribution apparatus distributes moving images of a surgical spot picked up during a treatment such as a surgical operation to more than one client without requiring expert knowledge on computers and communication. The image distribution apparatus comprises a dial-up communication unit which carries out digital communication with one or more clients, an Internet communication unit which carries out digital communication with one or more clients, an interface for image input which at least receives a moving image signal picked up by image pickup means attached to a medical device, an encoding server which encodes the moving image signal with a digitized image signal at one or more preset data rates in real time, and an image distribution unit which distributes at least one digitized image signal at one or more of the data rates to the one or more clients through the telephone network or the Internet.